

[A Farming Preacher-Prophet]

LIFE HISTORY

March 6, 1939

March 7, 1939

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*1 [Preacher*2] and [farmer*1] *2

Grace McCune THE [?] A FARMING PREACHER -Porphet I had heard quiet a bit about Tom, as he [?] is a well known figure in about town, and coming across him on one of the main street, I asked him if he would give me a the history of his life. He readily agreed to meet me [?] about two hours at a local barber shop where he agreed, but said he would be busy for about two hours for he had to would talk but in the meantime he had to “tend to some business” tend some business. But that he would meet me at that time at a local barber shop where we could talk.

Tom is famous for his knowledge of his remarks about the Bible , as he understands it , also for his [?] power or gift of seeing things and predicting future events. I didn't want to miss him and was at the appointed place I arrived at the shop ahead of the time appointed for I before time did not want to miss him . Several people was were in the shop there , and [?] having a very friendly but spirited arguement argument. and just as one of them a young man was told that he was “ just impossible, “ Tom came in.

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The young man said, "Tom, did you hear what they called me ? and what do you think about it?

"That they is wrong," Tom [solomanly?] replied, "for with God, nothing [?] is impossible. He [?] He's the only one that is that's mpossible impossible .

"I knew Tom would take up for me," the young man said youth boasted , "and [?] I guess you all will let me alone after this." After a little The argument more of their argument, [?] and they left.

As they went out , Tom said, "Mistess just what is it that old Tom can tell you, for you knows I'se just a plain old ignorant 2 stick man, that was borned and raised in the country. Yes'm [Yess'm?] , I was borned right down yonder in Oglethorpe County, and that' is that's still home to me.

"I worked in the fields when I was too little to last - out all day. When I went to school it was in just a plain old country school. The school house was made out of logs and the cracks was daubed with red mud to keep the cold wind out for us really had winters then.

"Along in them times schools won't wasn't no ways lak they is now. Our only book was that old Blue Back Speller. Yes, Mistess, that is that's what us larnt , and too , us stayed all day, and we us started out to school soon as it was good daylight. [?] Wasn't no going then at eight and nine o'clock in the mornin' lak chillun chilluns do so now. I didn't git to go to school, 'cepting just two or three years, 'cause I had to work in the fields. # When I was bigger big enough to work all day, I was paid 15cts [?] a day. Yes sum em , 15cts a day was good pay for us chillun in them days. My home was just like all the other houses then on the farms 'specially for the colored folks, just a plain old log cabin, and they called 'em notched houses, don't 'spect you knows what a notched house is ?

"But you know us didn't have saw mills back then, so us couldn't make planks, and nails won't wasn't plentiful [?] neither, so they just notched the logs as then they would log to

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make 'em fit and the cracks was all daubed with red clay and them old chimbles chimblies, they was made with sticks and red clay too but [?] us was happy and contented 'cause that was all us knowed.

"I tell you them old black molasses and ash cakes sho' [#?] tasted good 'specially after a day in the fields and us only had a biscuit on Sunday mornin', but that one biscuit made us feel rich, or as you say now like lak millionaires, only us didn't know nothin' 'bout that then. When us had biled [?] [vitals] it was most times just plain poke 3 berry sallet, but we us enjoyed it.

"I remember too [#?] that good old eatin' when my mother [?] fixed ash cakes and [in ?] sweet milk and many a day that is what us et, and us was happy to git it. Yess m Yess'm them was happy days, more so than they is now.

" We won't Us wasn't up to dressin' then lak us is now and most all us wore was just one garment . that's right ! and that garment was just a long shirts shirt . [?]'se worked many a day in the field in [?????] just a long shirt shirts . They was made right at home too . [??] mother would weave the cloth on her old loom at nights , and plenty times when us didn't have candles, she worked by the light from light[??] lighted knots and us chillun would play 'round on the floor.

"The very day I was big enough to plough plow , what you 'spose I ploughed plowed with? Well it was [?] old Mike, our old ox. He was just as good as a mule any day and when we us got out of bread, then one of us just put a sack of corn on Mike's back and a way us went, and it was eight or ten miles to the mill. While the corn was being ground, Mike had his dinner of corn shucks . and we was ready to start back home and if it won't too late, [??] got back home, us went right on to the field ' cause Mistess , us was raised to work.

"Long at that time, we us thought [??] twenty-five or thirty five cents a day [?] was doing fine wages. Then us had plenty of corn and 'taters , [??????] and a meat box full of good meat. That was some good meat 'cause we ra*3s[i*3]ed our own hogs and cured the meat

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by smokin' it with hickory wood. Back then, I don't know if you has done heered about this, but soda was mighty scarce skerce . Even that didn't 'mount to so powerful much 'cause corn cobb cob soda would sho make that bread rise. Yes [?] us just burn burnt[#?] the corn cobbs cobs til they was just a fine powder. That was good as anybody's soda.

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"That old persimmon beer was half of our living. Us chillun would gather persimmons by the bucketfulls. Mother would cook, them 'em with wheat bran and make it out into the big pones that [?] she used to make the beer mash and she [?] put lots of locust locusts in that beer it . It That beer was really good and so refreshen' after a hard day's work.

"We was not wasn't sickly ' long in that time, but when we was did get a little sick, mother would go into the woods and git herbs and grass. There was one kinda grass 'specially that she used. Just let me call Sally Anne, that's my wife, and bless her soul, she'll know."
Tom went to the telephone and was back in a few minutes. He said, "I told you Sally Ann would know. She always knows and I can 'pend on her. She stays right at home in her field of duty , just right on the job all the time.

"Sally Anne said it was just plain old scurvy grass, and you find it mostly in pine woods. It has long yellow roots and the roots is what they made the tea with. It was , and still is , 'cause us use uses it now. Its It's the finest medicine anybody can get git to cure colds , and then when folks has git the measles, if they would just drink old scurvy grass root tea, they would soon be well and [?] wouldn't have to worry even 'bout gittin' wet even .

"Another good tonic is this very simple one. and It'll will make you eat your head off and lessen you wants to gain in weight you had better not try it and [?] is that's just the plain old turnip. Yes, that is that's right. You just bile turnips in clear water 'til you have 'bout a quart of the juice and drink that juice two and three times a day, but I 'spects you would have to put some sugar in it 'cause it's mighty bitter. Along in them days us used the old black mo'-lasses to sweeten most everything; even used it in our coffee. "

Tom laughed and said, "Why even our coffee won't wasn't what it is today. Most all us had was corn meal, parched right brown, but to us, that corn /[#?] meal coffee sweetened with mo-lasses was really good, and we us was thankful for it.

"Another good medicine that the women folks used lots of times was what is known these days as black hall [?] root. They made tea out of that 'cause it won't easy to git out and buy medicine back then, for us didn't have drug / stores lak us does now. A doctor was seldomed called. Folks just made their own medicine. Yet there won't many folks sick in them days.

"Long back in them days when we us got in distress, trying to make a living we us have [?] up many used to set lots of nights, burning lightwood lighted knots to make tar. We sold that was sold by the quart or gallon. You know that blessed old mother of mine has even used that old homemade tar as a medicine. We had to drink the water off of the tar for colds and it was a good tonic also for any one , that didn't have no appetite.

"Still and too , that won;t wasn't just prezactly what us made it for , ' cause you knows back then us didn't have no such stuff as [?] [?] grease . That old tar answered the same purpose and it was used on wheels and harness to too, and just 'bout everything they needed to greeese grease .

"Another thing , Mistess , us didn't git no shoes 'ceptin' one time a year, and that was on Christmas, that was our Santa Claus . and we us would go to bed and try to see when come . , but [?] it wan't long 'fore us would be sound asleep . and in the Next morning we would find our brogan shoes with the bright shiny brass toes would be there, and how happy we us was ! just thankful for everything.

They said I was always a very [?] peculiar[#?] sort of a chap even when I was just a little tike. I was always asking questions. I was gifted with some kind of a strange

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power, but it was sometime before I could really understand this strange and wonderful [????????????] 6 power. Fact is, I don't understand it now.

"But things just comes to me. I can see them and tell folks for it is just like a vision. Back then some folks would laugh at me about them visions. But , Mistess, they is all glad now when old Tom can help them out sometimes. Sometimes I can't help them a-tall for the vision just will not come and that is all I tells, is just what the Lord shows me and tells me to help folks, and I has been trying to [?] help for fifty years or more.

"Along then we us had confidence in each other. We were Us was taught to live right and serve God. Never to take nothin' that didn't belong to us and never to do anything that would hurt anyone. We Us just lived in the bonds of the law . nobody broke the laws, and when night come , us could lay down and sleep with a good clear conscience.

"I still 'members the first time I ever heerd 'bout any one breakin' the law. It was just-outrageous. People for miles around were upset, skeered , and shocked. A man killed his wife. It was just terrible. We just Us couldn't understand it. When they tried him in court lots of folks couldn't git nigh the place 'cause everybody t#4i[r*4]ed to go . But he was sentenced and hung for murder.

"From that time-on folks began begun to grow weaker and wiser , and how wicked they are now ! Murder is a very common thing now and folks [will*5] just*5 take things that don't no ways belong to 'em. We Folks just don't live right. And God is going to how show us one these days. Oh, how wonderful and grateful it was that I could hear my mother pray." Here Tom broke down and cried. After a few minutes, he said: "You couldn't go wrong on her prayers."

At this moment someone called an and asked if Tom was there. The proprietor of the shop called Tom to the telephone. He came back to me [?] and said it was "[?] two men tgat wanted to see 7 me [?] , but; I told them that I was busy ," he added. The They men didn't

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accept that excuse and before Tom could get back to his story, they the men were at the shop for him.

Calling Tom to the door, they said, "We have just got to see you for a few minutes, but we won't keep you long." Excusing himself, Tom said, " I will I'll be back in a few minutes." The men were evidently farmers, dressed in their overalls and heavy shoes. They seemed to be farmers. They [?] escorted Tom out to their car . where they talked. I waited over an hour and still Tom didn't get back. I waited on and finally he came in and said, "It is so late and I just can't git 'way from them men. What is I going [?] to do?"

I asked him if I would come to his home in the the next morning and finish our interview.

Tom thanked me and said, I am I'm sho sorry 'bout dis this , but; one of these men is in trouble and wants to see if I can help him ." and [?] He told telling me how to find his house and but asking asked if I had would rather he would prefer to have him come back to town and talk to me "cause he lived way cross town." I wanted to see his home and said, "I will go be there if you are going to be at home. Yes'em Yes'um I will I'll be there lessen someone dies 'cause that happens very occasionally. I will I'll call you if that happens." He went back to the car where the men / were waiting for him.

Reaching Tom's house early the next morning, I found that even then he had done been over in town. already been to town and returned home. He asked ask me to have a seat, in the livingroom and would I apologetically said: " Excuse him me while he I [?] eat his breakfast , for he I went to town early so that he I could git back by the time I you got there here . " As he went out of the room to eat his breakfast, I looked around. The house was a new four-room cottage, painted white and trimmed in green on the outside. 8 The inside was quiet different. The walls of the livingroom were were plastered papered with the comics comic sheets of from the Sunday papers, with a and the border [?] around the top [?] of pictures cut from magazines. The room top was ceiled . overhead. The floor was covered with a brightly figured congoleum linoleum square covered the floor. The

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furniture consisted of a very [??] [a player piano , *6] with the rolls of music were neatly stocked stacked on on top of *6 it which was [?] by On each side was a large fern ferns in [?] home-made [?] boxes painted white The bench at the piano was covered by a long cushion with A crocheted cover adorned the cushion on the piano bench. a crocheted top. [?] I noticed a cabinet-style victrola and three large plain rocking chairs that were painted a bright shade of green . Fancy lace curtains were draped at the windows and a rocheded crocheted squares covered the glass panes in the door opening in the room. front door.

Tom was back returned in a very short time and asking asked me if I wouldn't would like to go through the house . and He said that he wanted me to see Sally Anne and his daughter. I followed him through a bedroom, where I saw furnished with an a walnut colored iron bed . painted a dark walnut Which was , and covered with a red silk spread, telephone stand, with the a telephone rested on a stand near the bed . There was a dressing table and several chairs , [?] completed the furniture, a heater , and [?] furnished heat for this room. The walls were also plastered with newspapers and the floor was covered by an old faded wool rug. The two windows were draped with [?] clean scrim curtains . , and the walls were covered with newspapers.

The next room was also a bedroom and a [?] fire was burning very brightly in a the grate. The A brown iron bed in this room was very much like the bed in the [?] other room, and was covered with a green silk spread. A dressing table , and a small table and several rocking chairs completed the its furniture in this room. The walls were also plastered [?] papered with newspapers . , and the floor was covered with linoleum square . in front of the fire was a box of baby chickens. The only window in this room was covered in a light cream [?] scrim curtains . [?] hung at its only window.

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As we passed to the next room which was the kitchen, I saw that it too was plastered papered with newspapers. It was warm and comfortable from the fire in the large woodburning range. A small dining table was covered with a clean white cloth . a side

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table held some dishes, and a very large cabinet was in one side of the room. A shelf just inside of the door held several very brightly polished water buckets. Two large windows furnished light and were covered with plain white curtains . draped the two large windows.

When we passed through out of the kitchen door, we was were in the yard and right in front of directly before the door was a well. Tom said, “ This is one of the best wells of water that you will find any where in in these days. It is cold and pure too, but yonder is Sally Ann and Sister at the washhouse. They are a little put out cause they is washing today, and, haint ain't had time to git fixed up. I told them that was all right cause you knowed us had to work.”

As we reached the washhouse I was greeted by Sally Anne, who is a very dark skined skinned Negro Negress , and in spite of the fact that they were at work, both were [?] *7 were very clean and neat [house dresses *6]. As Sally Anne smiled she showed a mouthfull mouthful of gold teeth. She is rather inclined to be fat, but Sister, as they called her, is [?] thin and tall, not as dark as her mother and father, and her hair was combed back and [?] close against her head. Chatting with them a few minutes, we looked around the large clean yards . as we chatted Showing me the hedges and different kinds of flowers, that they had just recently put out, Tom said, “If we us can ever get git the place fixed up lak we us want wants [??] this will be a right nice little place, but you know it takes money to do that. I have seen the time when I wouldn't have to stop for that, but like [?] most everything [?] 10 else, it is all gone now. “ I has had my day, and I has been wonderfully blest by a gracious and understanding God, and I wouldn't call back them days if I could cause I'se done had my day. I tried to make good use of the days past and I hope the good Lord can say “ well done, “ when I goes home, but we us will go back to the fire to talk. This sunshine is mighty warm and pleasant, but if you stay out too long you can feel the chill.”

As we were seated in comfortable chairs in the room, where the fire was burning so bright, Tom removed his large white felt hat, and asked if he might smoke his pipe, “‘cause he I

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could think better if he could I can smoke.” he said. Assuring him that it would be all right for him to smoke, I watched him as he very carefully filled his old pipe. He was dressed in a white shirt, gray wool trousers and a blue coat, not new, but clean and neat . black shoes , and a very bright red and blue tie , and white shirt, completed his costume. I wondered if some [?] had died, since I saw him the day before. He does not look so old, as he is tall and very straight. I judged that he was between sixty and seventy.

Getting the pipe going good he looked around and smiled. “Pride done ruint this old world , Mistess. Pride just done took the day. Back long in them times, us won't ‘fraid to work. Didn't know what it was to go to the store when us went to cook a meal, ‘cause [??] [?] was raised at home and all the cooking then was on done the fireplaces . clothes [?] was made at home. Why , when us went to church, it was in old home-made clothes, that our mothers made.

‘But bless the Lord that she didn't stop us from having meeting. Folks had ‘ligon ‘ligion then and from the time the pastor read 11 out the song and the brother over the corner started it off, every-body, would ‘gin to git happy, and when that old song, Amazing Grace How Sweet The Sound , was sung the shouting could be heard for a mighty long ways off cause didn't nobody stay home ‘cause they didn't have no clothes to wear. Everybody was there shouting.

“ We All of us worked hard in the fields, and as dutifully as the sun rose in the morning it found us in our fields at labor for that was the way we made our living and I did work. I wanted to have something and from daylight 'til dark we us was at our work. We *8 was tired out [At night *8]. that we us was, and ready for the bed. Warn't no running ‘round at nights for us on the farms, but we us did learn new things to grow and how to grow them 'em better. As we ‘vanced ‘long we could raise more things to eat and we us learnt how to grow sorghum cane to make [?] syrup. That was a change from the old black mo-lasses but I'se frank to say, them black mo-lasses is still my favorite. There was just nothing lak

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them gingerbread cakes that my mother made with mo-lasses and baked in them old ovens in the fireplace.

“ I has I'se farmed all my life and I has I'se made money in farming and then and too I has I'se lost money the same way, but mostly after farmers started to raising cotton as the money crop . for a while us made money that way then prices of cotton would go up and then [?] to the bottom. When the price started up, everybody would hold all they possibly could just wasn't arn't goin' to sell, just waitin' 'til it got a little bit higher and fust thing us knowed it had done hit the bottom.

“I was just lak everybody else. I knowed I was goin' to git rich that way, but one thing I didn't do, I didn't quit raising plenty of foodstuff for us as well as plenty for the stock. I done pretty 12 good. [?] I took care of what I had. I didn't th*9o[r*9]w it away and from my old ox, Mike, that I learned to plough with, I [??] had good mules and some fine horses. I loved good horses and I raised only the best, and if I does say it [?] won't wasn't no finer horses in that county than mine. “I sold one to a man here in town for a thousand dollars. Yes, mam that is right I had ‘vanced from that little notched log house until I had a good farm , and a comfortable house for those times. When I married In 1894, I had besides my farm and horses, a sawmill, shingle mill, grist mill, and a gin , and I run them by myself.

“Course now you understand there was different times to run 'em. I couldn't do it all at one time, but I got it all by hard work and saving what I made.” The insurance man came to collect [?] [???] was ready and waiting for he Tom went to a nail at one side of the fireplace, and took down an envelope with the book and money in it. We The collector chatted a few minutes with Tom and asked him if he was going to farm again this year. “I guess I will try,” Tom replied, “but all this rain us has been having , will sho bake this old earth later on.”

As the man left, Tom said, “How does you write that way and me just talking my head off ? I just can't see how you does it.”

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"It was hard at first," I replied, "but you know, when you have to work, you have to learn how to do the work."

"That's right," he said. "I has I'se been watching you as I talked and I has I'se had a vision. See if I am right."

"Well, I hope it is a good one," I said.

"I has I'se seen seed that you is the only one of your family left, and the last went, less than a year ago. Is I right?"

"You are," I replied. He started to say something else when someone called to him to come out in the yard for a minute.

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As I waited for him to return, I picked up one of the small chickens out of the box. Sally Anne came in the house. Seeing the baby chick, [?] she laughed and said, "Does you lak little things to? Bet you laks dogs."

"I really do," I answered. "I think they are one of the most faithful animals that we have, and I always had a dog when I was at home and the little girl where I board has one, that I am very fond of. "

Tom came back in the room and said, "It was about them same men that wanted to see me yisterday [yistiday?] . I done told him said that I won't [?] gwine nowhere "til us got through talking 'cause they can just wait. Won't Wasn't us talking 'bout cotton? I remember back in 1920 when things was sky high and I had forty bales of cotton here in the warehouse.

"Cotton was sellin' for forty cents a pound, but lak everybody else I held helt on to that cotton, just knowed it would go higher, and I 'vest 'vested heavily in land also, bought

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every bit I could git a hold holt of. Everybody was just money mad. But it won't wasn't right. And I lost everything I had 'long with the rest of the folks. I has I'se learned learnt that the best way to make anything out of cotton is sell it, just as quick as it gits out of the ginhouse.

"I never ploughed plowed up one stalk of cotton, cause I 'bided by the laws and didn't plant only what I was 'sposed to plant. Yes'em Yes'sum I has stayed right in the bonds of the law. I has I'se got some money on my land and it was a blessing to me. Why , last year the farmers didn't make anything. It was the worst year I ever 'rmembers 'members for farmin'. Course most folks wouldn't do lak the great President done asked 'em too. They just went ahead and planted their cotton and then when it was ruint, they ploughed plowed it under so they could git their check checks .

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"I think our President is the grandest man that has ever set in the president's President's seat. He is a blessing to humanity. He has done more for the farmers, than anyone else has ever done. He is just lak Moses, leaden' the chillun of Israel, just rying trying to lead us out of struction, but he don't git much help. He feeds the poor, and fixed fixes jobs so that people could can work . he is a blessin' sent by God."

Picking up a [?] worn Bible from the table, Tom said, "Does you believe in this Good Book? Cause if it is wrong then there ain't nothin' else left for us . does you believe in it?

"Yes,indeed! I replied. "I was taught to believe in that by my mother."

"Do you ever read your Bible?" he asked.

"I do," I answered.

"But did you just read it or did you [?] study it? I'll find out later, cause I am goin' to ask you some questions.

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"I ain't never had much education. But when I married, I decided that I was going to larn and make a man out of myself. I has sho tried to do that. I has l'se worked hard and I can read and write a little, specially can I read this book of Life. God lets me understand its meanings.

"But tell me about your wedding." I said.

"Well, along then times won't lak they are now. We Us had a big weddin', big for Negroes. Crowds of people was at our weddin' and there was plenty of white folks too. All Sally Anne's white folks was right there 'cause they sho did lak that gal and I'll tell you, she is one of the best of women and if I had a million dollars today, I would lay it all in her lap. She has never failed me. I always know that she is right here in her field of duty. She has worked right side of me in everything.

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" We Us has both farmed , [??] raised our things to eat. I didn't never try no 'bacco, just corn, peas, 'taters, rye , and wheat. Yes, I has made money farming and I has also lost money on the farm. It is hard work, out any kind of work is that way if you stays at it. [?] My check from the Government for thirty dollars came just before Christmas. It sho did come in a good time. I took that money and bought us all something to eat and some clothes . with it.

"We has just got two chillun: a girl, Sister, and a boy. Sister is a good and smart girl, but my son is just no 'count." At this time someone called him again and he went out to see who it was. Coming back in a few minutes he said "I has been wonderfully blest for God gives me these visions so that I can help folks and I has been so thankful, but Mistess war is comin'.[? arrow]

[? arrow] " I know it is, 'cause I has had the same visions I had before the World War. I has seed the people gatherin' together and marchin' in crowds, and then the Bible is full-filling

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fulfilling its teachin's, for it says: 'there shall be wars and rumors of wars,' and the war thats comin' and comin' fast, is goin' to be bad 'cause folks is [?] wiser" in [?] ways than they in the last war.

"I has had visions and predicted for our Govenors. Yes 'em I has had letters from more than one of them 'em , askin' me to help 'em. But lessen I gits the vision I can't help a'tall. But when God lets me see these things I think it is my bounding bounden duty to tell 'em.

" I has I'se been a liceneed licensed preacher for more than nineteen years, but I has I'se never been ordained. They has wanted to ordain me, but I just don't feel right yet in that way 'cause I is just plain and ignorant, but I takes my stand on my Bible, if it is wrong then I am wrong. But if this Blessed Book is right, then I 16 am right, for as the Lord said to Nickodemus Nicodemus , "Ye , must be borned born again.'

"Churches ain't lak they used to be, just too much high poluttin' polutin' preachin' now. I don't lak that. I laks to hear 'em preach from the Bible, and the heart, not just read off a sermon that somebody done prepared purpared and writ down for 'em. Why they don't study the Bible no more. They reads it, but not with understanding. Some of our greatest preachers today, can't explain what the soul of man is.

"Now my Bible says this, and I takes my stand on the Bible. See right here in the second [?] chapter of Genesis in the seventh verse." Tom slowly read with some difficulty, "'and the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul.' Now that is plain for anyone to read. The soul is the breath of life. My white folks comes to me lots of times and ask me questions about the Bible.

"I 'member one time. Us had up a question about the Sabbath Day. Has you always been taught that God made the earth in six days and rested on the seventh day?

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"Yes I have always been taught that." I replied, wondering just what he would say about that.

But he was ready, as he said, "Well then Mistess just let me read the second verse of the second chapter of Genesis to you."

And again he slowly read, "And on the seventh day [?] [?] God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

Handing the Bible to me, he said, "There read it for yourself, 17 and you can see where it says he ended his work on the seventh day." He has this place as well as the seventh verse which he had just read marked with a cross.

As I handed the Bible back to him, he said, "Don't you think that is plain for anyone to understand? For he says he ended his work on the seventh day. I is just a plain old Missionary Baptist preacher, but that is plain to me, and if all people would read with understandin' and belief it would be plain to them.

"*9 I was called to preach at my old church where I still keeps my membership 'cause I never has moved it in all these years. That was [a little more than a month ago , *9] everybody was upset and distressed 'bout these hard times. I just tore up that church. God just told me what to say. I told them that us didn't have no panic now, and I took 'em back to the days of Moses and Aaron and when Elisha led the people into Samaria and there was a great famine in that land.

"People were was so hungry that they et they own chillun. Some of them didn't lak and said won't no sich thing in the Bible. I asked them to read Second King Kings, sixth 6th chapter, twenty-eighth 28th and twenty-ninth 29th verses. They came to me and told me I was right. I had took my stand on my Bible and now it proved me right. Now I want to read them verses to you. " When he found the place which was marked with crosses, he read:

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“And the King said unto her, What alleth thee? and she answered, This woman said unto me, Give they thy son that we may eat [?] him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.

“So we boiled my son and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day: give they thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.’

“See I was right Mistess. This Blessed Book has never failed 18 me yet. I always tried to preach just what I see, ‘cause I don't like [?] this high polutin' preachin' and God don't lake lak it neither. He wants his deciples disciples to preach the truth and nothin' but the truth, but Oh, just for some more of them old meetin's when people got happy and won't wasn't ‘frald to show it, that is what I calls real ‘ligion.

“But I has l'se had my day and I 'spects I am l'm gittin' old. I don't knows know how old I is ‘cause my folks didn't know how to count. I sill try tries to farm and I sell sells face creams, powder , and sich things as that and piddles ‘round on odd jobs all the time.” “ What did you do back in those days for pasttime?” I asked.

“Well, ‘bout the biggest times was them old corn shuckin's. Now Mistess they were was really enjoyable. Sometimes they lasted for two and three days ‘cause folks sho raised corn then. We had a general that led the singin' , and there was big suppers , and I has shucked corn by the light of the moon and camp by bon fires. After thw the work was done, there was games and I tells you playin' marbles was a great sport.

“When we us just wanted to set a get together supper and party, us had hominy feasts. It was the real old lye hominy . just cooked in big pots full of it was cooked and that was something to enjoy and be happy and thankful for. # I was afraid to ask about dancing and I just asked if they [?????] continue to have cornshucking in the [????]

“Why, yes, lots of times, when the corn is all gathered in 'specially ‘mong the colored folks. They ‘vites croewds crowds to help git the corn shucked cause they don't change much

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as the white folks and many of them is still lak they used to be but we are our *9 as getting gitting our [folks *4] in better shape just 'vancing' right along."

As the same men came back for Tom again, I prepared to leave. He walked out to the sidewalk with me and said, "This 19 sun is delicious today and makes me feel good. I'se glad I'se not in the trouble dem folks is.

"Come back again when our flowers git gits to bloomin' out, and our place will look better."

As Sally Anne came around the house to tell me good-bye, Tom said, "Mistess, I am I'se going [?] to come and tell you 'bout that vision . cause It ain't right clear yit, but I has seen enough to know that you is goin [?] right on to success. I can tell you more about it soon. [??] that Tom was right, I started on my long walk back to town.

On my long walk back to the city I pondered Tom's parting remarks, and I hope that he is right.

The End